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**Photographic Intelligence Report**

**KARA-BOGAZ-GOL SODA COMBINE**

**BEKDASH, USSR**



**PIC/R-14/59**

**AUGUST 1959**

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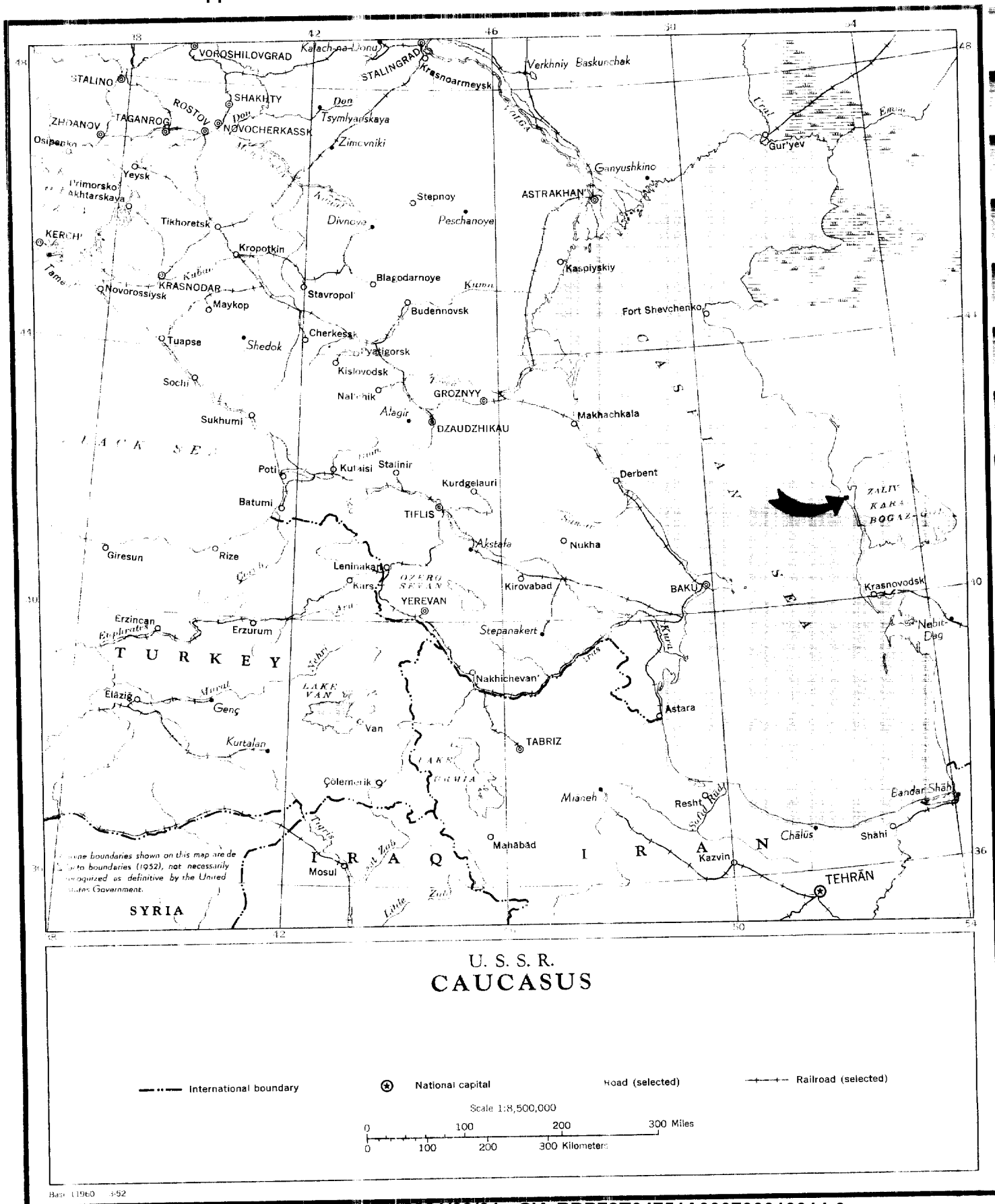
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## KARA-BOGAZ-GOL SODA COMBINE

### BEKDASH, USSR

The Kara-Bogaz-Gol Soda Combine, reportedly one of the major producers of sodium sulphate (Glauber's salt) in the USSR, is located on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, and situated on the narrow strip of land separating the Kara-Bogaz-Gol Gulf from the Caspian Sea. The Combine is engaged in producing chemical salts by evaporating sea water.

The salt extraction process takes place in an area ten miles northeast of Bekdash. Sea water is pumped to a large natural basin which serves as a reservoir. From the reservoir the salt water is gravity-fed to the evaporation beds. Salt extracted from the beds is loaded onto narrow-gauge railroad cars and transported to the port of Bekdash, where it is transferred to cargo ships.

25X1D  
Photography of [REDACTED] indicated that two salt evaporation beds of 370 and 280 acres were being worked by the Combine. In the past the salt evaporation beds were fed by pipeline from the Gulf of Kara-Bogaz-Gol. However, the receding water level in the Gulf apparently has made this impractical, and water is being pumped from the Caspian Sea.

Support facilities for the Combine are located at Bekdash and at Ochar-Ata, approximately two miles north of Bekdash. The various facilities associated with the Kara-Bogaz-Gol Soda Combine and other installations of interest in the Bekdash area are identified on the accompanying graphics, and described in the annotations.

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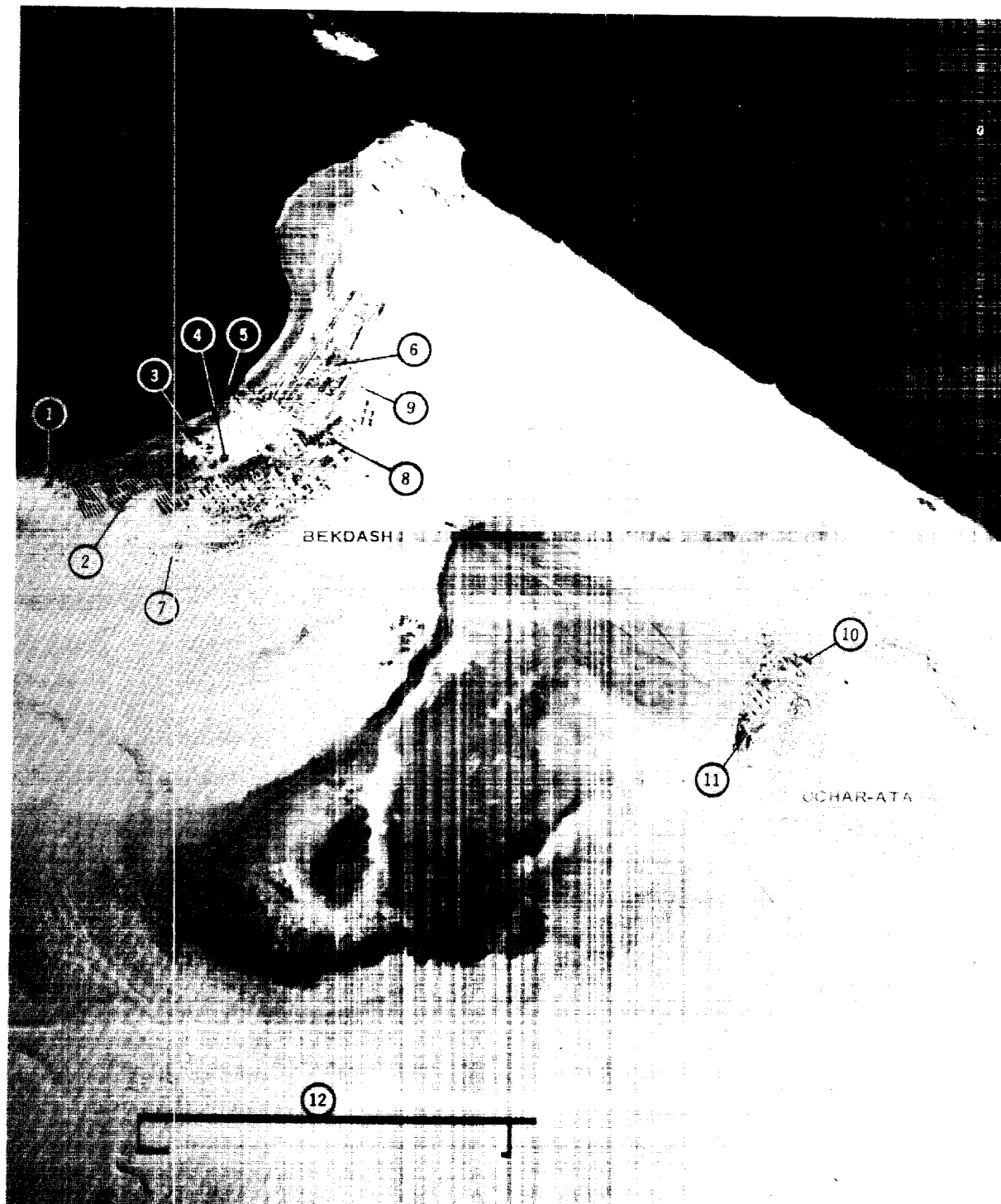


FIGURE 1. BEKDASH AREA.

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BEKDASH AREA  
KEY TO ANNOTATIONS

1. T-head pier, length 100', serviced by narrow-gage railroad.
2. Cultivated area.
3. POL storage area containing three tanks, each 25' diameter, connected by pipeline to pier (annotation 5).
4. Water storage area, containing four tanks, two 55', one 20', and one 10' in diameter, and one water tower 20' diameter. Area is connected by pipeline to the pier.
5. Pier, 200' x 40', rail-served, with three portable cranes. A dry bulk cargo ship, 250' x 35', is tied up alongside.
6. Cultivated area.
7. Radar installation consisting of one TOKEN-type radar, one possible height-finding radar, and one single mast probable VHF transmitter.
8. Sawmill.
9. Probable radio transmitter consisting of building 35' square with associated single mast.
10. Diesel power plant, 150' x 80', with adjacent transformer yard, 110' x 100'. Plant area is fenced and rail served.
11. Maintenance and repair area containing one building 155' x 70' with an annex 80' x 20', one building 250' x 70', and two railroad locomotive and car repair shops 100' x 35' and 70' x 35'.
12. Bekdash airfield. Runway 7,200' x 110', asphalt surface. No aircraft present. Electronic site, probable ILS, located 2 miles south of runway.

SALT PROCESSING AREA  
KEY TO ANNOTATIONS

1. Salt evaporation bed, covering approximately 370 acres, located in natural basin.

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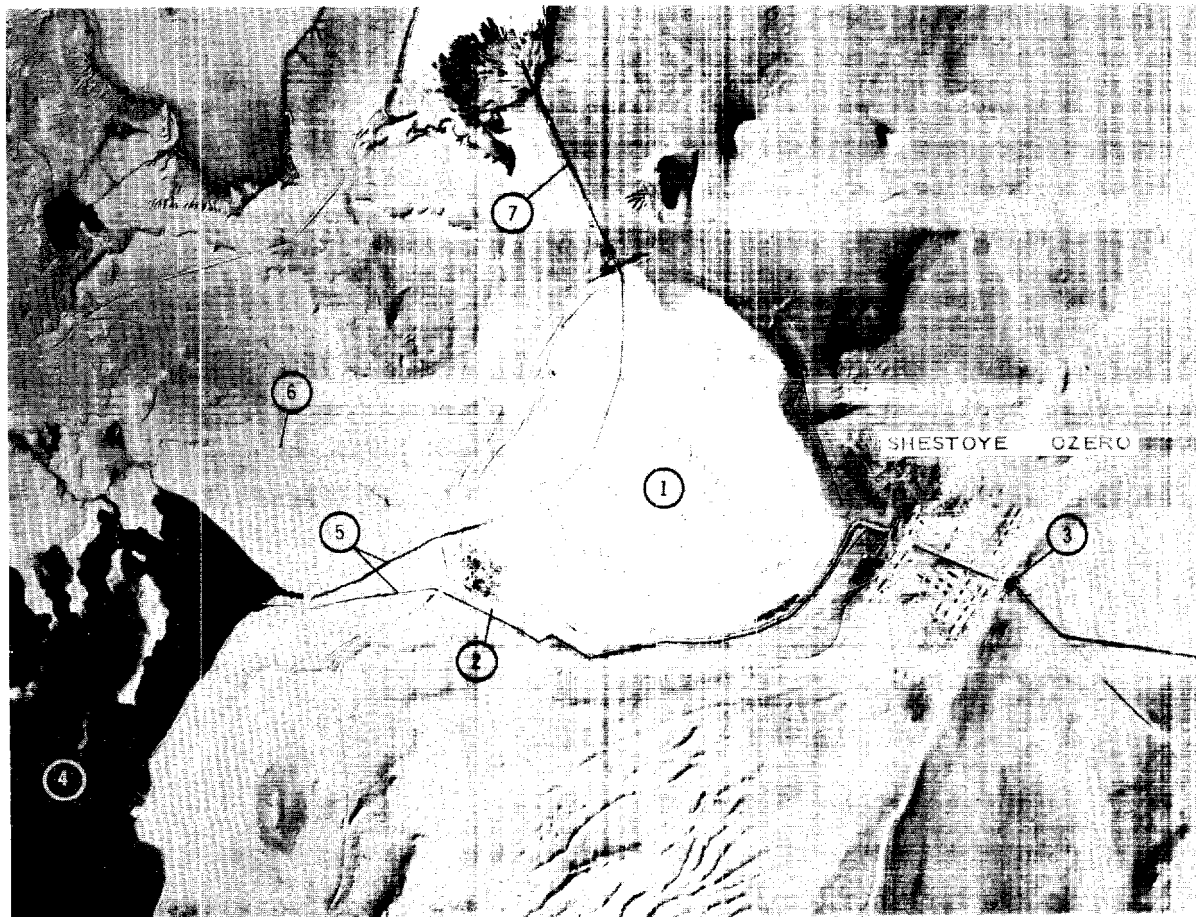


FIGURE 2. SALT PROCESSING AREA

2. Salt processing plant. Includes several crushers and conveyors, a furnace building 110' x 30' with associated stack, 120' high, and a monitor-roofed building 160' x 60' in the initial phases of construction.
3. Pumphouse 145' x 45', and adjacent transformer yard 170' x 80'. The pumphouse, formerly used to pump water from the gulf of Kara-Bogaz-Gol, probably is no longer in use.
4. Salt water reservoir, from which water is gravity-fed to the salt evaporation beds. This reservoir is fed by water pumped from the Caspian Sea.
5. Canals leading from salt water reservoir to salt evaporation beds.
6. Salt water pipeline from Caspian Sea.
7. Overflow channel.



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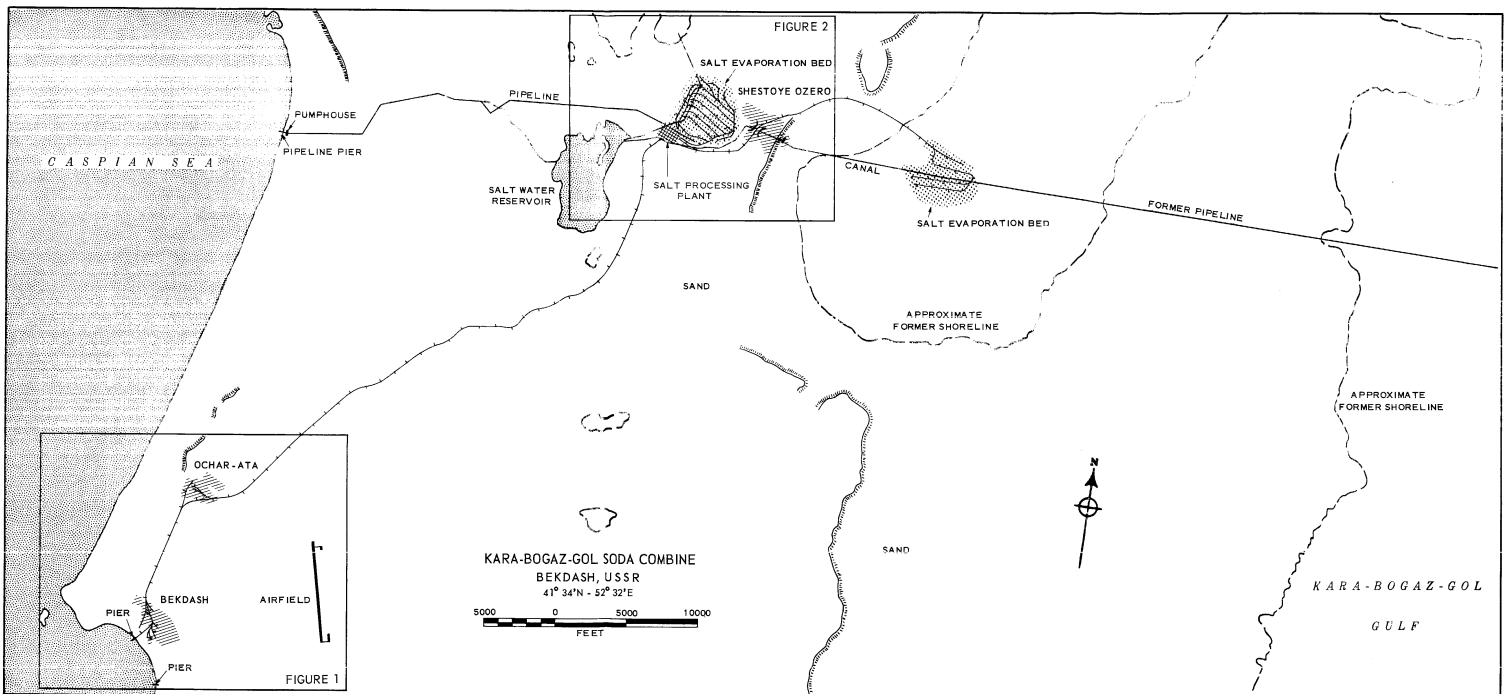


FIGURE 2. MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF KARA-BOGAZ-GOL SODA COMBINE

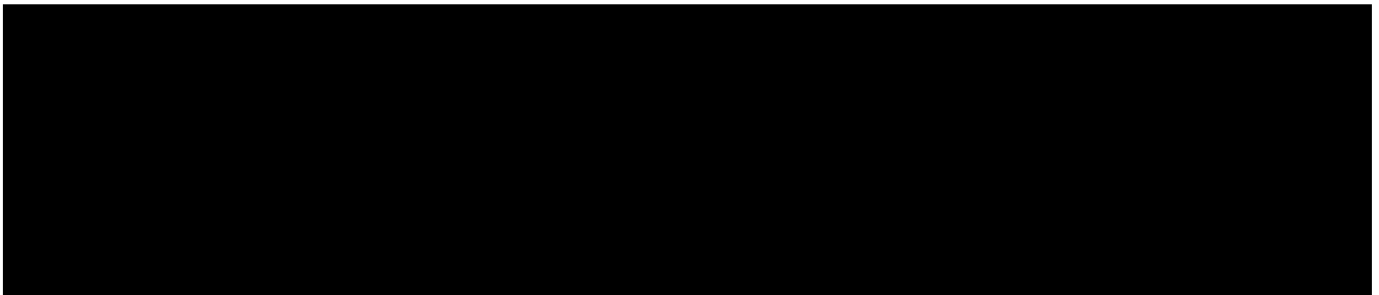
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REQUIREMENT RR/E/R73/58: Locate and describe the Kara-Bogaz-Gol  
Soda Combine near Bekdash, USSR.



25X1D

MAP DATA:

USAF Pilotage Chart 326D

COORDINATES:

Bekdash 41°34'N/52°22'E

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